

SALE OF POST-OFFICE SITE, BETHLEHEM, PA.

DECEMBER 18, 1920.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. ELLIOTT, from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds,
submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 14660.]

The Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 14660) entitled "A bill for the public sale of post-office site on the west side of South Main Street in the city of Bethlehem, Pa.," having duly considered the same, hereby make report of it to the House with the recommendation that the bill be amended by inserting in line 9, page 1 of the bill, after the word "States," the words "for a sum not less than \$20,000," and that as so amended the bill do pass.

The act of June 25, 1910, authorized an appropriation of \$20,000 for the purchase of a site for a post-office building at Bethlehem, Pa., and a site was purchased on April 10, 1912, at a cost of \$19,001. A hearing was held on this bill from which it appears that the present city of Bethlehem represents the consolidation of two towns or boroughs in existence at the time the site was purchased. They were divided by the Lehigh River, the old town of Bethlehem lying on the north bank and the town of South Bethlehem on the south bank of the river. After the acquisition of this site and before the merging of the towns a post-office building was erected in South Bethlehem, and it now appears that this building is adequate to meet the needs of the Government in the present city. The building is centrally located, is very close to the railroad, and under the circumstances it would seem that the old Bethlehem site is no longer required. The Treasury Department has no objection to its sale, as is evidenced by the report of the Secretary on the bill, which is as follows:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, December 15, 1920

The CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS,
House of Representatives.

SIR: Reference is made to your request of December 8 for a report in connection with bill H. R. 14660, which provides for the public sale of the post-office site and buildings thereon erected situate on the west side of South Main Street in the city of Bethlehem, Pa.

The act of June 25, 1910, authorized the purchase of a site at Bethlehem, Pa., which site was purchased under date of April 10, 1912. There is no authorization for a building upon this site.

It is the understanding of this department that the post offices at Bethlehem and South Bethlehem have been consolidated, and the main office is now located in the recently completed post-office building at South Bethlehem, Pa. Therefore the department can see no reason why the site in question owned by the Government at Bethlehem should not be disposed of.

Respectfully,

D. F. HOUSTON, *Secretary.*

The purpose of the bill is to sell this land to the owner of the adjoining land, the Bethlehem Realty Hotel Corporation, which proposes to erect a hotel on its property at a cost of approximately \$1,000,000. The corporation does not desire to build on the post-office site, but wants the land for use as a park in connection with the hotel. It might be stated that the erection of the hotel is a community proposition, there being several hundred subscribers to the project among the citizens of Bethlehem.

The bill provides that the proceeds derived from the sale of the site are to be covered into the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts, and your committee has amended the bill to provide that the site, which cost the Government \$19,001, shall be sold for not less than \$20,000.

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